

THE DICKENSIAN

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WHEN FOUND—

WE see from an announcement in a Scottish newspaper that the play "The Only Way," adapted from Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, is being turned into a story for serial publication in "My Weekly." The editorial announcing this brilliant idea speaks of the success of the play and comments on the fact that "this in itself is evidence enough that there is much good matter in *A Tale of Two Cities*, and so long as it is presented in attractive fashion it will be read by many thousands of readers." The writer goes on to say that the publishers of "My Weekly" have realised this, and will no doubt earn the gratitude of innumerable readers by having the immortal story prepared in the form of a serial, and assures us at the same time that "the story has been 'written up' by a clever and notable fiction writer who knows precisely the form which readers desire." We know of no printable expression to meet the case adequately, but our readers will apply their own particular exclamation at this colossal insult to genius.

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A copy of *The Clarion* of September 29th reached the offices of the publishers of this magazine addressed to "The Dickens-man." We presume it was meant for us. Any way, we have read the article in it marked with blue pencil, and written by "Pa Blatchford," under the heading of "In the Library." It deals with the subject "Why don't the youngsters of the twentieth century read Dickens?" which rather begs the question, because we believe that the "youngsters" do read Dickens, to a greater extent at any rate, than they do the other great Victorian novelists. The question arose in a letter from a friend to "Pa Blatchford" who had just re-read *Bleak House*, and, finding it long-winded, advanced that as the reason of the youngsters' misdemeanours. "Pa Blatchford" considers *Bleak House* the wrong book of Dickens with which to try the experiment, because it is "one of the worst novels Dickens wrote; it is one of the worst novels ever written by a man of many gifts." It has all the Dickens faults and none of the virtues—and so forth. He declines to turn from Jack London to *Bleak House*.

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"Dickens was a blend of third-rate melodramatic novelist and a first-rate humorist," says 'Pa Blatchford,' "If Charles Dickens were represented by Miss Summerson, and dear Agnes and Miss Dadcy, and Little Dorrit, and Little Nell, and Sir Leicester Dedlock, and the rest of the early Victorian lay figures, he would be as dead to-day as they are"

We are not quite sure who Miss Dadcy is, but we recognise the other "lay figures." But as "Pa Blatchford" likes "*Pickwick*" (even better than he does Jack London), and *Our Mutual Friend* and *Great Expectations*, we cannot count him as altogether lost. As a matter of fact we enjoyed reading his merry little article.

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A librarian was recently asked which was the most popular author among his readers. "Charles Dickens, without a doubt," he replied emphatically. "I have more demand for Dickens's books during the last few months than I have had for years." This was among "upper middle-class" readers, principally women, in a residential district. Booksellers and others who have been consulted confirmed the librarian's view. "Possibly," said one, "it is the pure human nature of the master's work that in time of trial has brought him back to popularity. It is certain that many ladies we supply are reading Dickens over again because they derive real comfort from his books."

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Mr. Bransby Williams is giving some of his well-known Dickens impersonations in a new and novel form. The characters he has chosen are Micawber, Mark Tapley, and Fagin in the condemned cell. The voices and the costumes are those of the personages from Dickens, but the faces are those of Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George and the Kaiser respectively. In each case the familiar words of the Dickens characters are elaborated by the use of topical allusions, and added to from the utterances peculiar to the three public men representing them. The idea is a very clever and amusing one, and in the hands of Mr. Williams creates great applause and laughter. The Kaiser as Fagin in the condemned cell is a wonderfully powerful piece of acting and is much to the liking of the audience, judging by the great ovations Mr. Williams receives at the end.

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The latest ally to Mr. Cuming Walters's theory regarding *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is Professor R. A. S. Macalister, whose article on the subject in the Irish Quarterly Review "Studies" for September, is a notable contribution. He not only disposes of the objections to Helena Landless as Datchery with clear logic, but ventures to outline a conclusion to the story in which she plays a notable part.

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Among the names on the list of "Missing" in the great advance is that of Rifleman Quentin L. Ten Broeke, one of the most genial of the London members of the Fellowship. He belonged to the Queen's Westminsters, and it was at Gommecourt that he received a wound in the head, which was believed not to have been fatal.

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We regret to announce the death of Mr. W. Fickling, official correspondent to the Fellowship at Peterborough. He had recently accepted a scholastic appointment at Battersea, and expired whilst riding on a bus in the latter district.

THE EDITOR.

THE FICTIONS OF FORSTER

TWO VIEWS

I.

By J. CUMING WALTERS

WILL you permit me to express my strong appreciation of the article by Mr. John B. Castieau on "The Fictions of Forster." Such an article, whether we agree with its conclusions or not, is a hundred times more profitable than discussions on the location of a Pump or on the exact number of milestones on Dover road.

Mr. Castieau raises the whole question—Do we know Dickens the man? I yield to no one in my love of Dickens, in my worship of him "this side idolatry," in my sense of deepest indebtedness to him as an influence, and in my admiration of him as the master of pathos and humour. But when I say these things, I am speaking always of Dickens the author. Dickens the man often eludes me. I read diverse accounts of him. To be quite frank, I do not know to this day whether he invariably acted up to the high standard he set in his writings, or, in other words, whether he consistently practised what he preached. This is not charging him with the offence of omission or commission: it is simply confessing that definite, authoritative, and complete information is lacking. And why must Dickens students complain of this? There is one reason only—the man who knew him best, and the man who accepted the supreme responsibility of writing his biography, failed to achieve the real task. He gave us a magnificent array of facts, he gave us a catalogue of deeds, he gave us a chronicle of events, he gave us lists and compilations and quotations and all sorts of literary miscellanea, but he never gave us Dickens the human being.

Of all big biographies, Forster's "Life of Dickens" is one of the least satisfying. This is no new criticism, and Mr. Castieau might have quoted George Eliot herself in support of his own contention. Writing to her friend, Miss Sara Hennell, Dec. 15th, 1871, and recommending her to read the Biography for the sake of the story of Dickens's early vicissitudes, she said, "The book is ill-organised and stuffed with criticism and other matter which would be better in limbo." Sadly, but unequivocally, I endorse every word, speaking as one who has to turn to the "Life" over and over again, and who has found it can only be used as a work of reference. It is to me dates and annals, not a "Life" of Dickens. But, as Mr. Castieau truly says, it is not even complete as a catalogue. I affirm that Forster was not scrupulously honest in his records, and not systematically fair in his references. The combined result is that some of the human aspects of Dickens are concealed, and those of his friends and associates imperfectly represented. It is a delicate matter for us to discuss his domestic affairs, and I, for one, have always declined to invade the sacred privacy of a great man's life. But Mr. Castieau has said more than enough in his article to prove that Forster failed in his duty as a biographer, and, by this failure, was deliberately unjust to Dickens's

wife. Moreover, had Forster done the bold right thing once and for all, would not the air have been cleared of unpleasant (and often untruthful) rumours?

In one respect Mr. Castieau's article creates a false impression. He seems to hint that if full revelations of Dickens the man were made, they would mainly be depreciatory. This is certainly wrong. If we have such adverse testimony as George Eliot gave (see her "Life and Journals" for May 5th, 1852, June 13th, 1870, etc.), we have on the other side such splendid and glowing tributes as Frederick Locker-Lampson offered. Mr. Castieau has quoted the former (though not fully); let me set against her atrabilious observations a few sentences from the "Confidences" of the latter. Both as to Dickens's personal appearance and conduct, Mr. Locker-Lampson's remarks differ entirely from all the disparagements that Mr. Castieau has cited—but this is only a further proof of the necessity of a complete and impartial biography being provided. Contrast, then, the statements on Dickens's "vulgarity," "commonplace talk," "foppishness," "soured disposition," "intense egotism," "softness outside, hardness at the core," with the following:—

"Dickens was a handsome, vivacious-looking man of rather low stature; he favoured the redundant locks and elaborate costume . . . which were the fashion of the period. . . . Dickens spoke to the point, listened well, and now and then made a sprightly remark. . . . The bright sunlight shone full on his face, on his dancing blue eyes and arching brows, and it struck me as the most animated countenance I had ever seen . . . I heard him make a speech; there was no gush or rhetoric; it was a most telling speech . . . In March, 1870 [the period, according to some, when he had ceased to be genial and generous, had grown ill-tempered and hated argument], I sat by Dickens. He was remarkably agreeable; his conversation was so affluent, so delightfully alive, so unaffected . . . He talked like a demon of delightfulness. Motley poked a good deal of pleasant fun at him, especially about his 'American Sketches,' pretending to be Mark Tapley, much to Dickens's joy, who gave it back with interest. . . . He favoured convivial philanthropy. . . . His appearance was attractive, he was not conventionally gentlemanlike-looking—I should have been disappointed if he had been so; he was something better. I shall not quickly forget him at Macaulay's funeral; there was a stride in his gait and a roll. He had a seafaring complexion and air, and a huge white tie. He was fond of dress; he owned that he had the primeval savage's love for bright positive colours. I consoled him with the assurance that it was the poet side of his nature that was so gratified. . . . He told stories with real dramatic effect.

There are more truly human touches in this brief description than will be found throughout Forster's voluminous chapters. We see the man at last, and, seeing him, understand also. The very defects pointed out by some critics excite our sympathy, and in any case, we come nearer to him as fellow-man, as one of our own flesh and blood. It will be noticed that Locker-Lampson unconsciously replies to almost

every adverse criticism of Dickens mentioned by Mr. Castieau. The fact is, there is nothing to fear from depicting Dickens as he was; the danger is in depicting him as he wasn't, as a "faultless monster," as a hero on the highest pedestal and with the most dazzling of haloes. In a Dickens biography we want Charles Dickens, not Sir Charles Grandison.

For several years I have been in the habit of keeping notes of all the personal evidence given of Dickens by those who knew him, and it is because out of these accumulated truths a Dickens has emerged so different from Forster's ideal, that I feel, like Mr. Castieau, it is time a new, complete, trustworthy, and intelligent biography should be prepared.

II.

By J. W. T. LEY

MR. CASTIEAU'S article "The Fictions of Forster," will cause a fluttering in the dovescotes, will it not? I am not one of those who regard Forster's book as perfect; it is unsatisfactory in many ways, incomplete—as I have found to my great inconvenience very often. But while these are facts, there are surely many points at which Mr. Castieau goes clean off the rails. In the space at command it is not possible to deal with this extremely interesting subject at all fully. I could write a good deal about Forster's "Life of Charles Dickens," but for the present, I propose to confine myself to Mr. Castieau's article.

He first of all gives it as his opinion that the book is not entitled to pride of place as the leading authority on Dickens. Now, be its faults what they may, what does he suggest should displace it? Not Mr. Teignmouth Shore's monograph—to which he appeals in one place—surely! No; Forster's book may be unsatisfactory in many ways, but I know of no book that has a claim to displace it as the leading authority. Then Mr. Castieau tells us that it is "a long tedious avenue of adulations through a desert of dates," that "various persons of no importance say how they met Dickens at school; shook hands with him; saw him buy a penny paper, etc." If Forster was alive to-day, and was about to write this book, and if he were to consult Dickensians as to how they would like him to deal with his subject, he'd find himself bewildered, wouldn't he? You, Mr. Editor, know at least as well as I do, that there are many people who quarrel with Forster simply because he does not give us more of the things to which Mr. Castieau objects—because he did not throw Gradgrind's mantle about him when he wrote. Some grumble because he did not tell us *all* the houses in which Dickens lived, their exact latitude and longitude, and the rent his father or he paid. Mr. Castieau himself complains because Forster did not tell us that "Dickens's taste in eating turned towards tripe and to fried liver and bacon." He had to go to Mr. Teignmouth Shore for the information*—but I fancy there is more metaphor than literal meaning in Mr. Shore's statement.

* See Mr. Teignmouth Shore's letter on another page.—EDITOR.

I agree that Carlyle's estimate of the book was grotesque. It is no more a Boswellian effort than is Southey's "Life of Nelson"—yet that is rather a good biography. Mr. Castieau says that "Boswell sometimes bores you with Johnson's conversation. Forster was candid enough to say that Dickens had no conversation, *and so he escaped the responsibility of recording any at all.*" What does this mean if it does not mean that Dickens *had* conversation, and that Forster deliberately dodged the recording of it?

Mr. Castieau next complains that the references to Mrs. Dickens are slight, and that he has to go to an American writer to discover that the novelist's wife had a good forehead, a small, round and red-lipped mouth, with a sleepy look or slow-moving eyes, and that the "weakest part of her face was her chin, which melted too suddenly into the throat," and to another American writer to learn that she was "a large woman, having a great deal of colour, and rather coarse." Does he seriously criticise Forster for not recording that Mrs. Dickens was "a large woman, with a great deal of colour, and rather coarse"? I ask him to remember that Mrs. Dickens was living when the book was written (she outlived Forster, in fact). How could Forster have recorded such facts?—assuming them to be facts. Nor could he deal more fully than he did with the novelist's domestic troubles. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that they are our concern, still, how could he recount them when Mrs. Dickens and most of her children were still living? It would have been an outrage. When Johnson died he had no relative in the world (I am not sure from memory whether his step-daughter survived him, but even if she did, she was, in fact, little more than an acquaintance). Boswell, therefore, had practically a perfectly free hand. Forster had nothing of the kind.

Mr. Castieau quotes some rather disparaging estimates of Dickens's character. I am on safe ground here; and I say that such estimates can be found only by the aid of the microscope. Dickens, of course, had his faults, and they appear—to me—even through Forster's text, but that his good qualities outweighed the faults a thousand times is certain. Look at Mr. Castieau's authorities—George Eliot, Mr. Putnam, Dr. John Brown—"who, so far as I can find, is noted for disquisitions on dogs," which is a rather curt dismissal of "Rab and his Friends," and reminds me of the man who told me that "Queen's Gardens" was piffle!—Gissing, Henley, Chesterton and Dean Hole. George Eliot was but an acquaintance, Dean Hole was little more; Mr. Chesterton was born five or six years after Dickens died, and is an authority only in respect of literary criticism; so is Gissing, so is Henley. What of Mr. Marcus Stone, who told me that Dickens was the best man he ever knew? What of Mr. Percy Fitzgerald? What of scores of others who knew the man intimately over long periods of years? (In passing, Dickens never quarrelled with John Leech, so far as I know.)

Finally, Mr. Castieau tells us that "Charles Dickens cannot be handed down to history as a man unless his Life is written by a man." What does he mean? Does he mean that Forster was not a man? If

so, he does not know Forster. In every sense of the word, Forster *was* a Man—a true man, a man of business, a man of the world, an unquestionably able journalist, and literary critic, and a true and loyal friend, to whom almost, without exception, the literary men of his time looked up and were indebted.

Forster's book is open to criticism, but Mr. Castieau has built with falsities upon a foundation of truth, and the structure will not bear the most cursory inspection.

WANTED—SOMETHING TO READ

By WILLOUGHBY MATCHETT

SOME time ago I was in the shop of a confectioner and baker. On the counter was the usual spread of pastries, cakes, sweets, etc. Two or three small marble-topped tables with attendant seats suggested a certain trade in light refreshments. Fair goddesses presided. In the background stood the proprietor, winding up a conversation with a gentleman apparently of the traveller order. The latter was saying, "I would like to stop and have some lunch here, but, really"—with a forlorn look round the shop—"really there is nothing to eat!" The reply of the proprietor was remarkable. "I quite agree with you," he said. "I often think that myself. There is nothing to eat!"

I am reminded of this by the fact of finding myself gazing at the serried rows of book-laden shelves that constitute a seaside circulating library. This is not one of the old seaside libraries known to me in my youth—I remember such a one at Broadstairs, perhaps the very one described by Dickens—where all the novels seemed to be voices from antiquity, the same I'm sure that Eve used to read Adam to sleep with—this, I say, is not such a one as that. Far from it. We pride ourselves here on being distinctly up-to-date. "All the latest novels," is a line that the proprietors here continually flaunt before the public gaze. One imagines them as ever sweeping an eager eye over the literary horizon, as calmly noting the appearance of a novel by A, as exchanging glances and nods about a novel by B, as snatching up their telescope and becoming wildly excited when a novel by C is to be discerned. In the language of that Siamese handbill (see *March Dickensian*), "Do a novel git publish, we hear of it and buy it." The result of their exhausting labours in the public behalf stares me in the face. Rows, rows, rows! Books, books books! Titles and authors' names mutely appealing to me to make a choice. Meek and retiring volumes in quiet bindings. Noisy, self-assertive volumes in glaring bindings. One and all, like maidens shy and maidens saucy, they await advances. Here and there I draw a volume out at a venture, generally to replace it with desperate quickness. You will surmise that I am a difficult fellow to please, and you won't be far wrong. The least thing will put me off a book, while, in a general way, it is only one written with a particular sort of charm that few appear to possess that seems to tempt me. Really, I am half ashamed. To the young lady in charge I must almost seem to be playing some sort of nursery game—

Tick-a-tack, tick-a-tack, tick-a-tack,

Take a book out, and put a book back !

That style of thing. But, in sooth, I am dreadfully in earnest. I am trying to find something fresh, light, and amusing, suitable to the hot weather and the seaside, something not too long, and something, preferably, that I have not read before. The conclusion is gradually forced on me, that though here there are volumes galore, alas, it must be said—*there is nothing to read !*

I should like to ask, by the way, why one's literary fare at the sea side should be supposed to be exclusively fiction. I could really do quite well with a volume of dainty essays, or reminiscences, or biography, or travel, but not one single example of the sort is here. Many of such books are lighter far than some of the novels I peep into. In these the characters are too often fussing about in a manner most distressing to one with the thermometer at what it is ; they talk excitedly, slam doors, descend stairs, jump into taxis, leap into trains, continually come and go, while there is frequently a horrid din going on from telephone bells : the whole thing strikes me as a childish device on the part of the author, who seems to think he has done the necessary trick when he has given his fictitious fact the apparent solidity of life, as if this were an end in itself, instead of being, as it should, merely the background to some beautiful edifice of the imagination. Pooh, pooh, it is merely Mr. Crummles's pump over again. Even in the telling of what *he* said and *she* said, with their gasps and glances, their blushes and starts, their laughter and tears, their sighs and their heartaches all in categorical order, one can still generally hear Crummles's pump creaking through it all. Now I object to Crummles's pump on principle. Away with it !

How beautiful it would be if one could only forget one's Dickens and start fresh again ! But alas, this library apparently has never discovered Dickens, neither does it know Meredith, or Hardy, or various other great names ; perhaps it is simply that they are not "latest novels." It revels in the second-rate. There is a Mr. Charles Garvice who pervades these shelves to a most unwarrantable extent. There is no getting away from him. I feel I have no use for Mr. Charles Garvice. He may write admirable novels for all I know, but his excessive fertility annoys me.

... Oh certainly, there is nothing to read here. Stay ! Here is "The Rosary," and some time ago I made fruitless efforts to obtain it. But now it leaves me cold. Mr. Clement Shorter has damned it for me with the words "fatal fluency." I do not always see eye for eye with Mr. Shorter in such matters—I think he is dreadfully wrong-headed about *Edwin Drood*—but there it is—"fatal fluency." On Mr. Shorter's head be it if I am really missing a charming book !

Why is the modern novel such an uncompromising take-it-or-leave-it affair ? Why is there nothing as a rule to lure me on to read it, no illustrations, no gossipy preface, no sprightly remarks from the author to the reader ? Its very appearance is repellent, a chunk, a wedge, of a thing, a mass of closely printed matter. If this matter, by the way,

seems too broken up into dialogue you know it is twaddly, if it is not broken up enough you know it is dry. It seems to be taken as a matter of course that you are prepared on the spur of the moment to be interested in the doings of people who never existed—really rather a large order. Perhaps you are, if you are young, with a robust appetite for fiction, but what if you are no longer young and your appetite needs whetting? Personally I like to feel that there is a man behind the book, so that at the start one can fancy a sort of laughing compact of make-believe with him. Without such compact the reader is really put in the position of a foolish, credulous person.

Here is a book by somebody named Birmingham—said to be amusing. But why, oh why, does he make play with the sacred name of our midland city? Too bad of him! Besides, I open the book and find it starts with somebody setting out from Euston in a plain, materialistic way. Now I am myself capable of setting out from Euston in a plain, materialistic way—in fact, I have done it several times, and, though I own the Start-from-Euston gambit is not altogether an unattractive opening for a novel, I do not feel myself sufficiently worked up to be tempted. Cast me a spell on Euston, etherialize the atmosphere of its long platforms, and you have my homage, Mr. Birmingham. Do you remember what Dickens did with a station platform in his *Barbox Brothers*?—an unforgettable picture! There I am—always coming back to Dickens! Ah, if one could only forget him!

I wonder, by the way, being in the wondering humour, if the Haunted Man forgot his Dickens. If not, why not? Think how jolly to have Dickens to read as an entirely fresh author—by the way, come to think of it, how did the haunted man lose his memory? Was it because he wanted to, or because the other fellow wanted him to? Really now I don't just recollect: as somebody says somewhere—Fancy that! There must be something in the strong air of this place that dulls the faculties. Suppose I were to assist in the dulling process by walking down the pier, willing hard to forget my Dickens. Nonsense of course... still... one never knows. And, by Jove, there's that electro-galvanic-magnetic machine at the pier end... rum thing, people do say it has the queerest effect on one sometimes.

I give the young lady in charge an apologetic smile, murmuring, "Sorry I can find nothing to suit me." She smiles in return with an understanding look; evidently she has met such cases before—nice girl!... Shall I go on the pier? I will.

* * * * *

Some hours later. At last!...

Returning home I hied me to buy a corn plaster to the shop of one Boots, "Cash Chemist" (by the way I never could see the attraction in that term; if he called himself the chemist who *didn't* want cash I think he would be far more popular. *Memo.*: Mention this to Mr. Boots), and there I saw a dainty little volume, price a shilling, that quite took my eye, so bought it. Dainty little volumes are not, strictly speaking, *materia medica*, but this one, I think, may certainly be looked upon as a tonic. Its title is *The Old Curiosity Shop*, and its author

a certain Charles Dickens . . . Dickens ! Dickens ! where have I heard that name ? can't just recollect this minute. . . . I descry a certain greatness in the man. I know of no author who writes quite in this style. Really he ought to make a name for himself. I wonder if he has written anything else. (*Memo.* : Call and ask Mr. Boots. He'll know. Good man Boots !) There is a character in this book of the name of Dick Swiveller, a tremendous fellow, I really am quite taken with Dick. And there is a dreadful dwarf of the name of Quilp, whom you might describe as a fair caution. Really you should read it—ripping ! I must own there seems a certain lack of motive in the actions of this Quilp, but take it that he is a sort of human gargoyle, and what else can you expect ? (*Memo.* : Must really call and congratulate dear old Boots on his find. Evidently jolly knowing fellow, Boots !) Then there is a certain Little Nell, and a plot afoot to marry her to Dick ; am most anxious to know if anything is going to come of it. Hardly think so, the author has too good a heart to tolerate such obvious misfit ; besides, Nell is a mere child. But it's no good my telling you about the book. Get it for yourselves. Wire old Boots, if the other fellows haven't got it . . . Thank heaven, I have something to read at last !

DICKENS BOOKS FOR THE BLIND

IN response to the appeal made in our last issue, for the sum of £105 to enable The National Institute for the Blind to prepare Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge* for the use of the blind, we have pleasure in printing the following first list of subscribers :—

	£	s.	d.
The Dickens Fellowship (Headquarters)	5	5	0
Mr. George Bradshaw, per the Manchester Branch	5	0	0
Mr. E. H. Burden	5	0	0
In Memoriam, Max	3	3	0
Mr. Walter Dexter	2	12	6
Mr. Arthur H. Berlandina	1	1	0
Mr. J. Comyns Carr	1	1	0
Mr. W. Walter Crotch	1	1	0
Mr. William de Morgan	1	1	0
Mr. F. T. Mankiewicz	1	0	0
A few of the staff of Messrs. Sedgwick, Collins & Co.			
Ltd., per Mr. Frank Staff	1	0	0
Mr. A. E. Brookes Cross	0	10	6
Mr. Frank Staff	0	10	6
Captain George Dey, A.I.F.	0	10	0
Lieut. D. M. Forsyth, A.I.F.	0	10	0
A few friends, per Miss K. Harwood	0	7	0
Miss Helena Sharp	0	5	0

THE POETIC INSTINCT OF DICKENS

By T. W. HILL

II.

A GOOD example of one of these opening paragraphs written in deliberate mood, is taken from *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Not only is the poetic imagery of the finest, but the diction itself runs in rhythm, and the reader can feel the regular beat of the accent running through it.

|| "This was the glad commencement|| of a bracing day in early winter,|| such as may put the languid summer season|| (speaking of it when it can't be had)|| to the blush, and shame the spring|| for sometimes being cold by halves.|| The sheep-bells rang as clearly in the vigorous air|| as if they felt its wholesome influence|| like 'living creatures.|| The trees, in lieu of leaves or blossoms|| shed upon the ground a frosty rime|| that sparkled as it fell and might have been|| the dust of diamonds. From cottage chimneys smoke went streaming up|| high, high as if the earth|| had lost its grossness, being so fair,|| and must not be oppressed by heavy vapour. The crust of ice on the else rippling brook|| was so transparent and so thin|| in texture that the lively water|| might of its own free will have stopped|| to look upon the lovely morning.|| And now the morning grew so fair,|| and all things were so wide awake and gay|| that the sun, seeming to say 'I can't stand it any longer,|| I must have a look,' streamed out in radiant majesty.|| The mist, too shy and gentle|| for such lusty company, fled off|| quite scared before it,|| and as it swept away|| the hills and mounds and distant pasture lands|| came out as bright as though they were unrolled|| brand new for the occasion."

And the marvel of it is that the writer of quips and cranks, the inventor of Wellerisms, the delineator of the gruesome murder of Nancy or the death of Quilp, or the terrors of the Gordon riots, the extravagant sketches of Micawber and Mantalini, is also the author of these charming vignettes of pastoral scenery. This master of descriptive atmospheric phenomena and country scenes was a Londoner—a Londoner all his life. As a child (for he came to live permanently in London at the tender age of eleven), his experience was of the not most delectable part of Chatham, then the depressing influence of Somers Town was his, and as a youth, the precincts (none too salubrious) of Doctors' Commons and the reporting gallery of the old Houses of Parliament. Dickens, until he reached man's estate, only had a child's early recollections of the countryside. Does it not prove that poets are born, not made, that this master of imaginative fiction could with an unerring hand, portray the delightful realities of romantic scenery?

And whether the scene is that of fearful hurricane—nature at its wildest—as in the classic instance of the storm in *David Copperfield*, or whether it is a dark and terror-inspiring wood like that surrounding the Warren in *Barnaby Rudge*; whether the scene depicted is a night one like the approach to London of Noah Claypole and Charlotte in *Oliver Twist*, or whether it is a bright day as in the description of Marseilles on an autumn day, in *Little Dorrit*; or the stillness of the night when Jonas destroyed himself in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Dickens is equally

happy, and equally at home. His choice of words, as is the case with all great poets, is exquisite.

But in addition to these deliberate passages, there are the little brilliant phrases, where in the middle of an incident, the poet breaks in with a few lines almost lisping in numbers, if so voluble an author can ever be said to lisp. It will be seen in the following from *Dombey and Son*, that Dickens was a master of strophe and antistrophe :—

“They were the strangest pair at such a time that ever firelight shone upon. Mr. Dombey so erect and solemn, gazing at the fire; his little image, with an old, old face, peering into the perspective with the fixed and rapt attention of a sage. Mr. Dombey entertaining complicated worldly schemes and plans; the little image entertaining Heaven knows what wild fancies, half-formed thoughts and wandering speculations. Mr. Dombey stiff with starch and arrogance; the little image by inheritance, and in unconscious imitation. The two so very much alike and yet so monstrously contrasted.”

Here is another from the same book, a jewel of the first water :—

“It is not the nature of pure love to burn fiercely and unkindly long. The flame, that in its grosser composition has the taint of earth, may prey upon the breast that gives it shelter; but the sacred fire from heaven is as gentle in the heart as when it rested on the heads of the assembled twelve and showed each man his brother brightened and unhurt.”

Is not the choice of words exquisite?

One other aspect of this poetry in Dickens has been already foreshadowed by the quoted passages, but it will bear consideration, and it is that he apparently without design falls into actual rhythm. Not like Silas Wegg, the literary man *with* a wooden leg who adapted all kinds of popular verse to the purpose in hand, at whose poetical proclivities Dickens pokes such glorious fun; but rather like the conscious work of a writer of blank verse, albeit Dickens appeared to be unconscious of this tendency in his work. The well-known rhythmic passage recording the death of little Nell has often been noticed, but the railway journey in chapter twenty of *Dombey* is not so generally recognised, although it is worthy of W. E. Henley in his most boisterous mood.

Dickens always had a predilection for the stage, and much of his writing has a touch of transpontine melodrama in its make-up. It has been said by more than one captious critic that Dickens kept at the back of his mind the dramatic effect, or rather the stage effect of whatever he was engaged upon while producing his novels. Whether this be so or not (and the difficulty of adapting his work to the stage goes far to shew the contrary), it certainly is a remarkable fact that when the scene lands itself to dramatic treatment, Dickens frequently writes in unrhymed verse. Sim Tappetit (of the immaculate calves) almost without exception talks in blank verse, perhaps because Dickens through this medium, was caricaturing the conventional stage swaggerer.

Omitting all descriptive details, Tappertit's actual words, fall easily into lines, thus :—

"Is that the noble captain?"

"Yes, who should it be?

Lead on and make remarks when I require you.

Forward. What news to-night? Is the room prepared?"

"It is."

"The comrade—is he here?"

"Yes, and a sprinkling of the others—you hear 'em?"

"Playing skittles—light-hearted revellers."

"What does my noble captain drink?"

Is it brandy, rum or usquebaugh?

Is it soaked gunpowder or blazing oil?"

"Prentice, who waits without?"

"Mark Gilbert, age nineteen,

Bound to Thomas Curzon, Hosier, Golden Fleece,

Aldgate. Loves Curzon's daughter. Cannot say

That Curzon's daughter loves him. Should think it

Probable. Curzon pulled his ear last Tuesday week."

"How?"

"For looking at his daughter, please you."

"Write Curzon down denounced. This is a flagrant case.

Put two black crosses to the name of Curzon,

Which means vengeance, complete and terrible.

Prentice, do you love the Constitution?"

"I do."

"The Church, the State, and everything

Established—but the masters?"

"I do."

Then in less heavy manner and shorter lines :

You meet in me, Miss V.,

Not a prentice, not a workman,

Not a slave, not the victim

Of your father's tyrannical behaviour;

But the leader of a great people

The captain of a noble band.

Behold in me your husband,

Yes Beautiful Dolly—charmer—enslaver

S. Tappertit is all your own.

Mr. Boffin's denunciation of Rokesmith, when he discharges him is also largely rhythmic—it is in Dickens's best tragic manner and if the asides and expoundings are withdrawn, the sentences run almost naturally into blank verse of varying metres: and the same is the case with Pip's final meeting with Estella, and many parts of the *Tale of Two Cities*. *Doctor Marigold* and *Boots at the Holly-Tree Inn* are especially full of genuine poetry.

It is, however, necessary to exercise some restraint. It is not possible within the limits of a short paper, which is at best only intended to be

suggestive and not exhaustive, to make as many quotations as could be wished; the extracts used are probably not the best that could be found, for the task of selection from such a vast mine of wealth has been great, but it is hoped that the illustrations and indicated passages used, have served to show that Dickens not only wrote in prose, but very frequently thought and worked in poetry.

[*Conclusion*]

THE MYSTERY OF MR. PICKWICK'S NIGHTCAP

By E. A. FRASER

(Of Melbourne Branch)

SOME years ago a writer in the "Cornhill Magazine" (to be exact it was August, 1909), dared to speak disrespectfully of Mr. Pickwick's nightcap, which, he said, because it had strings to tie under the chin, must have been like a lady's bonnet. We have positive evidence that it was a "tasselled nightcap, secured firmly on his head by tying beneath his chin the strings which he always had attached to that article of dress," and it is so depicted in Phiz's illustrations. Mr. Pickwick having a bald head found the strings necessary to keep the cap from slipping off. That it could not have been of the lady's bonnet variety is conclusively shown in Chapter XLI., which describes Mr. Pickwick's first night in prison. The gentleman known as the Zephyr with that light and airy persiflage suited to his name, said, "'Allow me to have the felicity of hanging up your nightcap, sir.' With this, the speaker snatched that article of dress from Mr. Pickwick's head, and fixed in a twinkling on that of the drunken man." A nightcap which resembled the sunbonnet of to-day, covering the whole head down to the back of the neck, could not have been snatched off in the manner described.

There is one incident, however, connected with Mr. Pickwick's nightcap which will not bear the strong light of the higher criticism. On that ever memorable night when Mr. Pickwick got into the wrong bedroom we find that, after meditating over the fire in his own room, "he began to undress, when he recollected he had left his watch on the table down stairs." Then, "he slipped on his coat, of which he had just divested himself, and taking the japanned candlestick in his hand, walked quietly downstairs." It was after he had recovered his watch that the trouble began. Entering the room he supposed to be his, he "leisurely divested himself of his shoes and gaiters, took off and rolled up his coat, waistcoat and neckcloth, and slowly drawing on his tasselled nightcap, secured it firmly by tying the strings." Now where did he get the nightcap?—On his first night in prison "he took his nightcap out of his pocket in which he had the precaution to stow it in the morning." But on this occasion there could be no reason for taking such a precaution, and if he were in the habit of carrying his nightcap about in his pocket there would be no need for the author to tell of his "precaution" on the day he went to prison.

Then near the close of his interview with the middle-aged lady who indignantly pointed "to the door," Mr. Pickwick hastily put on his hat over his nightcap." The question is "Where did he get that hat?" The unaccountable presence of these articles of headgear gives rise to several questions. Was Mr. Pickwick a conjuror? There is no corroborative evidence of his being so. Was Mr. Pickwick a spiritualistic medium who could materialise things? He may, on this occasion only, have had some connection with a ma-hat-ma. Was the incident only a bad dream, and was Mr. Pickwick's wandering in the passages where Sam found him only a bit of somnambulism? This explanation is plausible but cannot be sustained, seeing that Mr. Pickwick was afterwards introduced to the lady by her fiancé, Mr. Peter Magnus, when they recognised each other with unfortunate results.

Being unable to find any reasonable explanation of the source whence Mr. Pickwick procured the nightcap and the hat while in the middle-aged lady's bedroom, I am compelled to conclude that this part of the story cannot be authenticated, and must have been interpolated in the notes of the Pickwick Club by someone who wished to damage Mr. Pickwick's highly respectable reputation. The only other possible conclusion is that Mr. Pickwick was a fairy, and even a cleverer one than Cinderella's godmother; for the old lady had a pumpkin with "rats and mice and such small deer" from which to produce by rapid evolution the wonderful coach and horses, while Mr. Pickwick apparently produced a nightcap and a hat out of nothing.

DICKENS'S WORKS AS SCHOOL TEXTS IN CANADA

IT is interesting to note to what extent the works of Dickens are specified as texts in connection with the high school entrance examinations and in the school course in Canada. Mr. H. Gerald Wade, speaking at the Winnipeg Branch of the Fellowship, said he had been informed that it has been the general practice of the Department of Education to specify, alternately, in connection with the high school course, the works of Shakespeare, Eliot and Dickens. By this arrangement every pupil completing the high school course is required during the course to study one of Dickens's works. For the school year just opened, *Martin Chuzzlewit* has been specified as a text for Grade Eleven, the final year in the high school course. Mr. Wade also understands that in connection with the high school examinations, one of Dickens's works is specified as a text each year, alternating between *A Christmas Carol* and *The Cricket on the Hearth*. In last year's entrance examination, the former was specified; in the coming year, the latter has been specified. In Ontario, in the Junior High School entrance examination for 1917, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, *The Chimes* and *Oliver Twist* are specified. And in the Junior and Senior Public School Diploma, Senior High School Entrance and Entrance to Model School examinations *David Copperfield*, *Tale of Two Cities*, *Oliver Twist* and the *Old Curiosity Shop* are specified.

"WHAT THE DICKENS"

DATES FROM SHAKESPEARE-FALSTAFF DAYS

By JOHN SUDDABY

AS to the many expressions bearing on the name or word dickens so interestingly exemplified in the August *Dickensian*, let me add two more. The *Universal Songster*, Vol. 2, dated 1826—at which date Dickens was but fourteen years of age and of course unknown—gives at page 73, a variation in quoting a song with patter between the verses, entitled "Mrs. Bullocksgall's Ball," or "Aldgate in an Uproar." Mr. and Mrs. and the little Trotters were an hour late in arriving; Trotter apologising to the host, remarks that his apprentice was such a mischievous lad that he had to stay and shut up shop himself, adding, "the other day, the lad was stabbing the mutton with our great carving knife; he desired me to never mind as he was only acting King Richard. So I says, says I, 'I'll *play the Dickings* with you if you acts King Richard on my mutton, and cuts it so that 'tar'n't fit to eat.' And perfectly right too! why he might just as well stick you, Mr. Trotter, as stick a sheep, for as Shickspur says, 'you may as well take my life as take the means by which I live!'" There was such a getting in and out of coaches as the guests came and went, one lady being nearly squashed to pieces and her gown spoiled through the smallness of a coach door. Some guests soliloquised on having got too full whilst one considered he had had a shortage of drink, and asked where was there a pump? "Yes, sir, bear a little to the left and the thing like a post with four lamps is Aldgate pump."

Such is the description of this city pump in Dickens's youth—possibly as he remembered it—and made famous by him in association with Toots in *Dombey and Son* and elsewhere. Ward's *Real Dickens Land* gives the pump—apparently an up-to-date structure surmounted with one lamp, and this picture is quoted in Vol. I. of *The Dickensian*.

My book does not say who is the author of the song quoted from, but in further patter, a Miss Tripe, one of the butcher hostess's guests, remarks that her father, to banish melancholy reflections from his mind, makes her learn lively songs and tunes, selecting them himself. She mentions the songs "Barclay and Perkins's Drayman," and "Fireman Waterman." Both of these are by the London songster, Thomas Hudson, who has been much before readers of this publication of late. It is remarkable how Dickens's favourites are with him in his writings and journeys. This Drayman of Barclay and Co's, the great city brewers, was with him when he visited Italy in 1844, for in his *Pictures from Italy* he says the multitude of old oil paintings so much alike, reminded him of the Evangelists of Barclay and Perkins's Drayman and the Cherubims of the Jolly Young Waterman.

Readers will remember the Waterman as humorously dealt with in *Pickwick* by the chairman at the Brick Lane Temperance meeting. Dickens mentions Barclay and Co. through a quoted verse from Dick Swiveller in an early chapter of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, and in a miscellaneous article—I think *Night Walks*—he speaks of a visit at

midnight to the brewery on the Surrey side of the Thames near the bridges. This brewery used to be spoken of as the largest in England, and perhaps the world. I should like to hear of this place, so long neglected, being respectfully admitted as part of Dickens Land, aye, and, almost with apologies, with a tablet by permission to follow, and an early London ramble of Dickens students paying it a visit. As to "Fireman Waterman," apparently the song from the way the words are quoted, is jokingly alluded to by Dickens in 1866, in making a speech to the Thames Rowing Clubs, of one of which he was or had been president and had extensively boated between Oxford and London. Shall we annex the Thames Valley with its winding river, history and scenery as another extensive piece of Dickens Land?

An important point now arises on the various "dickens" expressions under consideration, which I have never seen alluded to in either Dickens's days or since. It is that Shakespeare as far back as 1602 puts into the mouth of Mrs. Page, when addressing Robin, Sir John Falstaff's page, "I cannot tell *what the dickens* his name is. What do you call your knight's name?" It is really marvellous how Shakespeare crops up in successive generations as points arise. By the by, Falstaff is also mentioned in the Rome letter, as well as the Jolly Young Waterman and B. P. and Co's Drayman—a nice trio of fellow travellers for our beloved author to have with him. Dickens, who was so taken up with Shakespeare and Falstaff in early years and through life, must have noticed this reference to and play upon his now renowned name. In those early years of his authorship, when only known as Boz, and readers were hungering for his name, they had, it now appears, only to have turned to Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* and to have read, shall one say this prophetic rebus as such, and they would have had the key, and forestalled Chapman and Hall in their subsequent official notification. It is a case of being now wise after the event, and we must not think of kicking our ancestors (if now alive) of eighty years ago. It is with the historical play of *Henry IV.* part 1 that Dickens has by readers, been mostly associated with Shakespeare and Falstaff, it being there where Gadshill, the pilgrims and the bespoiling of them is mentioned, and there Gadshill Place is situate, which Dickens ultimately acquired and resided in to the day of his death. But midway in his public life, he was very much to the fore in the comedy of *Merry Wives of Windsor*, being stage manager and acting the part of Justice Shallow in nine representations of it in the city of London and the chief cities and populous centres of England and Scotland. This was in 1848, when the object in view was to endow a curatorship for Shakespeare's house at Stratford-on-Avon; Sheridan Knowles, the dramatic author and actor being in view as the first curator.

A concluding paragraph. Dickens, as he went through life, took in a world of detail equalling anything ever heard of, and the film-like reproduction of all this in his works shows he could not but have grasped, in every respect, the rendering of Shakespeare's dickens allusion in all the possibilities of the future. It would be a very honourable determination, with an early consciousness of the mould of his literary

power, to aim at answering the enquiry personally, a very worthy secondary aim to that of purchasing Gadshill Place. It is on record how he showed in his association with Bulwer Lytton, his love of the weird and strange, and what more in accord with this feeling than that the Inimitable Boz should have, in response to the Immortal Bard, such an ideal realism of his own name as shadowed forth. To think, the two afterwards grouped in death with Shakespeare's memorial facing the grave of Dickens! And when in *Old Curiosity Shop*, Slum, the poor advertising poet to say to Mrs. Jarley, "Upon my word and honour, you'll find in a certain angle of the dreary pile (Westminster Abbey) called Poet's corner, a few smaller names than Slum," probably little did Dickens think he was anticipating the feeling of the nation that he himself should be buried there. Strange indeed! The small type nameless "dickens" of Shakespeare has become truly DICKENS in the three centuries' flux and maturity of time.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

CXLIII.

FROM boyhood's days, when at my father's knee
 I first heard "Pickwick," to the present hour;
 When'er my little world seemed cold and sour
 I went to Dickens's land of liberty:
 Unfailingly I there refreshment found,
 And cheerful friends accordant to my mind
 Whose wholesome being made me feel more kind
 When I returned again to common ground.

He made a world; but made it of those things
 That lesser men forget: His patient poor
 In all true wealth are richer than the rich:
 He does not lead us to the noisome ditch
 Where reigns *the Superman*—but opes a door
 Into the land where lowly men are kings.

AIDAN CLARKE.

THE HUMOUR OF DICKENS

AN unusually large endowment of his aptitude for associating diverse ideas and things and following in an instant the natural conclusion of what might appear simple and common-place juxtaposition was Dickens's prominent gift. His imagination, his literary skill, his story-telling capacity, were all subsidiary and inferior powers. He was emphatically a humourist, and as such he has shown the world how much there was in humour to divert the mind. The strength of his power of graphic description lay in the use of odd but simple and familiar similes, and thus he imparted a tone of humour to things not essentially comical.—From "Humour," *Globe*, 28th September, 1916.

DR. BARNARDO AND DICKENS

MR. JOHN T. PAGE, in the *Warwick Times*, has been contributing some personal reminiscences of Dr. Barnardo, from which we extract the following :—

"Like Charles Dickens, Dr. Barnardo was a great lover of Christmas time. Christmas Day was always a high day at the Homes, and on several occasions I had the pleasure of dining with Dr. Barnardo and his large family on that festive occasion. It was delightful to see him moving amongst his boys here, giving one a hearty slap on the back and then with his arm round another whispering some helpful word into his ear—he never appeared to more advantage as the "Father of Nobody's Children" than he did on Christmas Day. For the time he laid aside work and was the leading spirit in the mirth and good fellowship which prevailed. Attired for the nonce in the garb of Father Christmas, he generally headed the procession of the plum puddings, which invariably formed a conspicuous feature of the festivities.

Dr. Barnardo had little or no sympathy with those who sought relaxation in theatres and kindred places of amusement. Probably no man ever knew less than he did of plays and playgoers. I believe that only one play ever attracted his attention sufficiently to induce him to visit a theatre. He told me that he and a friend had gone to see 'Jo,' the adaptation of Dickens's *Bleak House*, dramatised by Mr. J. P. Burnett. Miss Jennie Lee created and played the part of the poor crossing sweeper Jo, and I know the Doctor thought it wonderfully true to life.

Dr. Barnardo was well read in the works of Charles Dickens, and one of his favourite quotations was that trite dictum of Bumble's—'The law's a hass.' In November, 1895, on behalf of 1,100 subscribers, he was presented with a jubilee gift of £3,417 10s. 4d. and an illuminated address. The speech he then delivered contained the following references to *Oliver Twist* :—

'Perhaps on this occasion I may be permitted to glance back over the thirty years now almost traversed, since as a youth not quite twenty-one I began my work in London. As I survey this tract of years I could almost come to the conclusion that I am living in another country, or rather that the young waif and stray, the little homeless and destitute orphan of to day, inhabits a different England from that of 1866. Why I remember *Oliver Twist* ! I have known Oliver intimately under many different names. I recall Noah Claypole and Mr. Fagin. I remember the cowardly bullying of the one and the thieves' training school of the other. In fact I knew three Mr. Fagins: him of Houndsditch, him of Short's Gardens, and, earlier still, him of Fulwood's Rents. The Artful Dodger was one of my earliest captures from Fulwood's Rents itself, and of him I have many recollections. As for Mr. Bumble, perhaps he is not dead yet, although I am thankful to say, that in a very large number of cases he has been dismissed from his parochial duties. But I gladly bear witness that whereas poor Oliver was the rule when I caught my first arab in the slums, he is now the exception. Oliver has come or is coming into his rights. The law which Bumble so flatteringly described has been transformed by new developments of Christian sympathy, and to some extent at least, it has come round to the side of the little ones.' "

MRS. T. CANN HUGHES

IT is with deep regret that we record the death of Mrs. Cann Hughes, the Hon. Secretary of the Lancaster Branch, which occurred on the 28th September, six days after the birth of a daughter.

Mrs. Hughes was the younger daughter of the late Mr. Walter Heywood, of East Chapel, Winkleigh, Devon, and all her life she was an enthusiastic Devonian. She was appointed a life member of the London Devonian Association (of which her husband is a vice-president) in November, 1913. After a period of scholastic work and teaching in London, Mrs. Hughes, who had studied sanitary science and hygiene (in which subjects she became an authority) accepted service with the Tottenham Urban Council. She went to Lancaster as health visitor in 1907. For four years, she discharged the multifarious and to some extent pioneer duties of the office with conspicuous success, her amiability and tactfulness overcoming many difficulties and much prejudice on the part of those whom she sought to serve. She served on the Committee of the Invalid Children's Aid Association, and also on the Committee of the University Extension Society (of which organisation she was for a short time secretary). She was the first lady to lecture before the Astronomical and Scientific Association, and has served on the committee of that body. She was an enthusiastic Dickensian, and interested herself in all the activities of the town of which her husband, Mr. T. Cann Hughes, to whom she was married on 28th September, 1911, is Town Clerk. The deepest sympathy will be extended by all Dickensians to Mr. Cann Hughes in his great sorrow.

THE CITY PICKWICK CLUB

THE first meeting and dinner of the season took place at "The George and Vulture" on 9th October, when Alderman Sir Edward Cooper presided. At dinner the tables were closely filled with members and friends, amongst the latter being Alderman Domoney (who made a real Pickwickian speech in replying for the visitors), Captain George Dey and Lieut. D. M. Forsyth (wounded Australian warriors from the Somme), Mr. A. W. Ratcliffe, of Rochester; Mr. Anthony J. Smith, of Cobham and two members of the Pickwick Bicycle Club (Count Smorltork and Mr. Winkle). Mr. Ratcliffe proposed the toast of the Club in a spirited and friendly speech which was replied to by the Chairman, who proposed the visitors. Captain Dey, in responding, dwelt upon the great bond that had always held together in the past the Colonies and the Mother Country, and expressed the conviction that the war would reveal more distinctly what each was to the other, and teach each to know the other as they should be known. He spoke also of the wonderfulness of London, and how its very name conjured up that of Dickens and his books, particularly "Pickwick." "Count Smorltork" also spoke to the same toast. An exceptionally good programme of music and recital was presented by Mr. Willie Rouse, Mr. Clay Thomas, Professor Wm. Miles and Mr. Raymond Paton. Altogether the evening was notable and enjoyable.

DICKENSIAN SONGS

XII.

THE enclosed parody on the old, but well-known song "Champagne Charlie," appeared in an obsolete periodical called "Echoes from the Clubs, a Record of Political Topics and Social Amenities." It was issued weekly, began in May, 1867 and died in December, 1868, The poem appeared in the issue for September 25th, 1867.

T. W. HILL.

OUR MUTUAL FRIEND'S SONG

I.

Men say that I'm a humorist, and I can tell them why :
 Upon the ways of life I look with keen observant eye.
 So looked three centuries ago old England's wondrous will,
 Whose magic pen immortal made the precincts of Gadshill.
 For GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name, my boys,
 GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name.

II.

Not to the poet I pretend—there are but two or three :
 And dear old THACKERAY'S caustic touch is not the thing for me.
 I could have sketched in modern prose with tolerable skill
 The wild young PRINCE, and reckless POINS and FALSTAFF on
 Gadshill.
 For GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name, my boys,
 GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name.

III.

Ay, sweet JACK FALSTAFF ! Verily his humour was sublime :
 I introduce my PICKWICK, the FALSTAFF of the time :
 Imagine that rare hero engaging with a will
 A mob of men in buckram by moonlight on Gadshill.
 For GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name, my boys,
 GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name.

IV.

All round the year men read me ; and faith ! I mean to write
 So long as these clear eyes of mine are filled with living light,
 So long as oddities abound, and laughter lingers still,
 So long as there is magic in the memory of Gadshill.
 For GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name, my boys,
 GADSHILL CHARLIE is my name.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE FICTIONS OF FORSTER

SIR, In the very interesting article on the above from Melbourne in your issue of October, I am credited with saying that Dickens had a taste for tripe and for fried liver and bacon. So he may have had — so have I for the latter! — but I never said so, but did in "Charles Dickens and his Friends" record that Forster possessed these tastes.

Yours truly,

W. TEIGNMOUTH SHORE.

AN ECHO OF MISS HAVISHAM'S CASE

SIR,—Unless my memory is at fault, the romance associated with the Queen's Gate House, is somewhat weakened in view of the fact that a relative of the late Mr. Nation has informed the press that the story of the alleged jilt (referred to on p. 262) is a pure invention.

Yours faithfully,

WILMOT CORFIELD.

27 Longton Grove,
Sydenham, S.E.
October 4th, 1916.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

CHELTENHAM.—The Branch assembled in the Highbury Rooms, Grosvenor Street, on Friday, October 6th, to open their winter session, which is to be devoted to the study of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Mr. T. Lyon, the President, introduced the book, and in extending a welcome to Sir James T. Agg-Gardner, Vice-President, he remarked that there was one amongst them whom Dickens would have delighted to honour, for if there was a man in Cheltenham who was every man's friend, it was Sir James. A hearty round of applause endorsed the compliment, and Sir James in acknowledging spoke of his interest in the object of the Society and hoped it would continue to be carried on successfully. He congratulated Mr. T. Lyon on his re-election as President, and speaking of the activities of the Fellowship, paid special tribute to the lady members. Mr. W. E. Palser, the Secretary, gave a short report, in which he remarked that the Branch had raised £101 5s. 2d. for charitable purposes and that £13 was realized as the result of a dramatic performance at Church Down. Mr. T. Lyon then introduced and gave an interesting survey of the chief characters of the book, and readings were given by Miss Winsor and Mr. W. H. Symonds.

GLOUCESTER.—The winter session was inaugurated under exceedingly encouraging circumstances at Northgate Mansions, on October 4th, when there was a crowded attendance, and, better still, the keenest possible interest was manifested in the proceedings. The President, Mr. E. Kendall Pearson, was in the chair, the other members present including the Mayor and Mayoress (Sir James and Lady Bruton), the first President of the Branch (Mr. H. W. Bruton), and Messrs. H. Godwin Chance, M.A., W. R. Voller, and J. W. Barnett (past Presi-

dents). In his annual report, the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, (Mr. James Richings) expressed satisfaction that the membership of the Branch had been well maintained, notwithstanding war conditions, there being over two hundred "effectives" on the roll at the close of the 1915-1916 session, and recalled with pleasure the philanthropic work which had been accomplished, with especial reference to the gifts sent by the members to soldiers and sailors, and the entertainment of a party from the local Red Cross Hospitals on the occasion of the summer gathering. The report noted with gratification the recognition at headquarters of Mr. H. W. Bruton's services to the cause in his election as a Vice-President of the Fellowship; the knighthood of the Mayor; and the fact that Bishop Frodsham had been elected a member of the Branch. Sympathetic allusions were made to the death of two members, Miss Ada Higgs and Miss Clara Butt; and also to sons of Mr. H. F. Dickens, to C. M. F. H. Bretherton (an ex-President of the Branch, and a former Mayor and City High Sheriff), and Mr. T. Beacall, a step-son of Mrs. S. Bland (a former Mayoress), and Lieutenant E. E. Polack himself (with whom had been an interesting correspondence), having been killed on active service. Mr. Richings also presented the financial statement, which was considered to be of a highly satisfactory character, the balance in hand at the commencement of the year, having been augmented at the end, notwithstanding the increased philanthropic activities of the Branch. The report and balance sheet were adopted upon the motion of Lady Bruton, seconded by Mrs. Garnham. A list of 17 new members was approved, and the President called attention to the interesting fact that it was headed by the City High Sheriff and Mrs. J. O. Roberts, thus bringing within the Fellowship the holders of the chief civic offices in the city. Upon the proposition of Sir James Bruton, seconded by Mr. E. J. C. Palmer (the founder of the Branch), Mr. Pearson was unanimously re-elected President, and heartily thanked for his services during the past year. Upon the motion of Mr. E. A. Ind, seconded by Mrs. Bland, Mr. W. L. Edwards was added to the Committee to fill a vacancy, and the following members of the Committee were re-elected: Mrs. F. H. Bretherton, Lady Bruton, Mrs. Courteen, Mrs. Garnham, Miss Tabram, Mr. J. W. Barnett, Mr. F. H. Bretherton, Mr. H. W. Bruton, Sir James Bruton, Mr. H. Godwin Chance, Mr. T. S. Ellis, Mr. C. H. Fox, Mr. E. J. C. Palmer and Mr. W. R. Voller, with the President and Hon. Secretary ex-officio. On the proposition of the President, seconded by Mr. H. N. Flewker. (London), Mr. Richings was unanimously re-elected Hon Treasurer and Secretary, and cordially thanked for his services during the past year. The annual business over, Mr. Flewker gave an excellent paper on *Pickwick*, the book chosen for discussion this session, and Mr. Palmer read from the opening chapters; a discussion followed. Several of the lady members brought their knitting needles to re-commence the making of woollen comforts for our soldiers and sailors, and the hope was expressed that in helping to supply these and other wants in connection with the war, the Gloucester Dickensians would excel themselves this session. At the close of the meeting, a collection was made on behalf of the fund for equipping a new club for wounded soldiers in the city.

HACKNEY AND STOKE NEWINGTON. The first meeting of the Session of this Branch took the form of a social evening when a goodly number of members were again re-united. Songs and recitations were

excellently delivered by Misses Syrett, Smeddon, Stannard, Spencer, and Messrs. Young and Mahoney. The Kingsland Choral Society, under the conductorship of Mr. W. Malone, rendered part songs excellently during the evening. Miss May Spencer and Mr. W. Cotter officiated at the piano.

HATFIELD.—On October 11th, a meeting was held in the Dickens Room of the Salisbury Arms. Mr. Woodrow was in the chair, and there was a good attendance. The following Officers were elected for the ensuing season:—Mr. Hope, chairman, Mr. Woodrow, vice-chairman, Mr. Butcher, of Barclay's Bank, Hon. Treasurer, to succeed Mr. Frank Sheehan, on Active Service, and Mr. Edmund Woodrow, Hon. Secretary. The Committee were re-elected with Mr. Weldon to succeed Mr. Morgan retired. A short Reading "Nicholas Nickleby at the Portsmouth Theatre," was given by Mr. Gunton and was much appreciated.

HULL.—The twelfth session was commenced at the Metropole, on October 6th, when the meeting took the form of a Social. The President, Mr. R. J. Burdon extended a hearty welcome to all members, old and new. On behalf of all present, he expressed deep sympathy with the relatives of those members, who had fallen while on active service in France. These are Mr. H. H. Elsom, the late Secretary, who with Mrs. Elsom, had rendered invaluable service to the Fellowship. Mr. F. K. Page, a highly respected member, and the son of the present esteemed Treasurer. Lieutenant Alfred Petty, son of Mr. Mortimer Petty, B.A., has also been killed in action. Mr. M. Petty was the first President of the Branch, and largely instrumental in its formation. On account of Mrs. Elsom's resignation Miss G. Watson will act as Secretary assisted by Mrs. Anderson. Twenty new members were elected. An excellent programme arranged by the President, was carried out, and as on previous occasions, the following artistes charmed the audience with their singing, Messrs. Coulson, Lelly and Williamson, and Miss Pattie Rowland, and Miss Alice Common. Miss Olga Martin was the Elocutionist. Miss G. Watson, L.R.A.M., accompanied the songs in her usual able manner, and contributed to the evening's enjoyment by playing a Pianoforte Solo.

LONDON.—The season opened with an "At Home," at Anderton's Hotel, on the 7th of October, when a large number of members and friends assembled. Several musical items and recitations were provided, and tea was served during the afternoon.

MANCHESTER.—The session opened pleasantly on 6th October, when about seventy members met at Milton Buildings. Mr. Arthur Humphreys, the President for the year, devoted his address to shewing how the Fellowship had justified its existence since it was founded fourteen years ago that night. He outlined the history of the Fellowship since its inauguration, showing how its aims and objects had been fully carried out in all particulars, and said in conclusion that he had "no hesitation in saying that the Fellowship has justified and more than justified its existence." His address was greatly appreciated by all who heard it. Excellent recitations from Dickens were given by the Misses Alice and Elsie Walker and Barbara Tickle. Miss Beatrice Read gave several songs which greatly delighted the audience.

Mrs. Kinnell presided at the pianoforte. During the evening, refreshments were dispensed by the ladies of the Council.

NOTTINGHAM.—This branch opened the session on October 10th, with the usual conversazione and whist contest; considering the times we are going through, there was a good attendance. Mr. R. Ivens, the President, announced that the lectures would in future be held monthly. The work for study on November 7th, will be *Bleak House*, the meeting being held on the Dickens Room of the Mechanics Institute as usual. The Secretary (Mr. Albert Rudd) read part of a letter received from his son serving with the "Royal Sussex's" in India and who had sent a description of the Dickens Fellowship existing in Bangalore.

SOUTHAMPTON.—The opening meeting of the Session was held on the 9th October, when Mr. H. C. Ashdown gave a very interesting lecture entitled "Character Studies from Dickens." In this he was assisted by the following ladies and gentlemen, Messrs. B. Dymott, D. Cue, M. Lane, N. Hickley, D. Perren and E. Ashdown and Messrs. Hoskins, Foot, Wallis, Cook and R. Gubbins, who appeared in costume and represented scenes from *Domby and Son*, *David Copperfield*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, etc. A violin solo by Private M. A. Smith, songs by Mrs. Chris. Conroy and Mr. Wilfred Powell and a recitation by Miss V. Hickley completed the programme which was thoroughly enjoyed by a very good audience. Several new members were elected and the Session promises to be a very successful one.

SOUTHEAST.—The War is taking its toll of the branches members belonging to the Army, and it is with deep regret that we have learnt that Lieutenant Con Squires, West Yorkshire Regiment, was killed in action on August 18th inst. He was only 27 years of age. Sergeant Dale was killed early in the war, and another popular member, Reginald Shears of the Queen Victoria Rifles, has been reported some time ago, as "Wounded and Missing." Second Lieut. J. W. D. Clark has been wounded, but is now in hospital at Bristol and is progressing satisfactorily. On the other hand, it is pleasant to note that Second Lieut. Lindsay Pope has been promoted to Lieutenant on the field, and is safe in Egypt, and Lance-Corporal Will King, O.T.C. has now obtained his Commission and is expected to leave England shortly. Mr. J. R. Prockter has joined up and is training at Nottingham.

STOCKPORT.—The opening meeting of the session was held October 5th. The occasion took the form of a social gathering. The chair was occupied by the Secretary. Miss Kilner presided at the piano, and played selections, and also accompanied the songs which were given by Miss Hanson, Mr. Marsland and the Secretary. *Bleak House* will be studied during the session, and short papers and readings will be given by members on subsequent meetings.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS.

A Christmas Carol. By Charles Dickens. Illustrated by Gordon Robinson. London: Charles H. Kelly. 3s. 6d. net.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

"Charles Dickens and the Occult," by C. Sheridan Jones. *The Occult Review*, October.

"A Fading View of Pickwick," by Roland Ringwalt. *The Living Church* (Milwaukie, U.S.A.). 9th September.

"Why don't the youngsters read Dickens?" (In the Library), by Pa Blatchford. *The Clarion*. 29th September.

"What Dickens did when he went to Church." *Lloyds Weekly News*. 1st October.

"A Great Romance; the Stage History of The Only Way." *Dundee Advertiser*. 30th September.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood; some suggestions," by Prof. R. A. S. Macalister. *Studies, an Irish Quarterly Review*. September.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

NOVEMBER

All meetings commence at 8 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

2. Stockport: "Bleak House," by Mr. E. Helm, at Sunday School.
3. Hull: "Some Women Humorists, Dickens's Contribution," by Mr. F. Noble Wood, at the Metropole.
Manchester: "Beadles in General and one in particular," by Miss Ingall; and "Some of the Women Characters of Dickens" by Mr. A. S. Kinnell at Milton Buildings, at 7-30.
4. London: "The Optimism of Dickens," by Mr. F. T. Dalton, at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, at 3 p.m.
7. Nottingham: "Bleak House," by Mr. Richards Ivens.
8. Liverpool: "How some Liverpool Streets got their Names," by Mr. L. Rowlands, at Royal Institute.
9. Edinburgh: "How I first met Little Nell and what I have learned from her," by Miss Helena Sharp, at Goold Hall.
London: Headquarters Council, at 30 Charing Cross, S.W., at 6-30.
Winnipeg: Monthly Meeting at Wesley College, Convocation Hall.
13. Southampton: "Some Schoolmasters of Dickens," by Mr. J. E. Cross at All Saints' Institute.
17. Hull: Dramatic Evening, arranged by Miss Jessie Anderson and Miss H. Wright, at the Metropole.
Manchester: Special Social Evening and Supper, at Clarion Café.
22. Liverpool: "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," by Mr. F. Lawson Cook, M.A., at Royal Institute.
Bristol: "Pip, the mystery of *Great Expectations*," arranged by Mrs. R. Brown, at All Saints' Hall.
23. Edinburgh: "Charles Dickens as Editor," by Mr. John Hogben, at Goold Hall.
27. Hackney: Lecture: "The Religion of Charles Dickens," by Mr. E. H. Burden, at West Hackney Lecture Hall.



BOB CRATCHIT AND TINY TIM

From the original Water Colour Painting by Fred Barnard

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